

Time

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Summary:

They say 'time heals all wounds'.

Eddie says that's bullshit.

Time

Author's Note:

this is straight up garbage i am so sorry

Some would say that time heals all.

Eddie says that's bullshit.

If anything, time made it infinitely worse. Forcing him to watch as Richie slowly outgrew his childish facial features. Always making him watch, knowing damn well he couldn't act on any of the emotions said change brought about. It was almost enough to make him want to take off the watch strapped to his thin wrist and crush it against a wall or something. If it wasn't so expensive, he probably would. Over the years between childhood and adolescence, Richie had changed. Physically, anyway. He still cracked jokes about Eddie's mom at the worst of times and still gave Eddie a stress headache at times. He was still Richie, underneath.

If you asked Eddie, he'd tell you about how Richie's unruly hair had settled out into longer, softer looking curls. Or he'd tell you about how Richie had shot up like a tree, easily towering over the now 5'7 Eddie, or maybe the way that Richie's old coke bottle glasses had been switched out for a thinner, newer pair that (in Eddie's humble opinion) complimented his features much nicer. Or possibly the way that Richie's freckles had practically sprung out the minute he turned 15, giving Eddie a whole new kind of heart attack.

If you asked literally anyone else, they'd say that Richie's hair still looked like the same unruly mess that it had always been, that his glasses still sat too big on his face. If you asked about his freckles, they'd have said "What freckles?". Sometimes it made Eddie think he was going crazy. Or maybe he paid more attention to Richie than he'd like to admit. Even now, in the middle of a class, he was thinking about Richie. It didn't help that said boy was sat just off to the right of him, next to the window. It didn't help that the afternoon sunlight streaming through the window just happened to catch the ends of Richie's curls, highlighting the soft brown colour. It definitely didn't help that Richie had just turned to the side, noticed Eddie

staring and pulled a face, snickering to himself before turning back around to stare boredly out the window.

Eddie was convinced he was going to die. Surely Richie had to have some kind of clue, right? You don't catch your best friend staring at you as often as he caught Eddie and not make some kind of assumption, right? He almost wished that Richie was totally oblivious though. At least that'd mean he had a chance. Surely if Richie had noticed Eddie's feelings and had returned them, he'd have said something. Eddie wasn't stupid, he knew that next to Richie he was a solid 4 at best and that he had a minimal chance. The silent confirmation didn't hurt any less, though. Eddie had stopped growing the second he hit 5'7 and hadn't filled out at all. He remained thin, childish looking and not in a cute, suiting type of way. Eddie Kaspbrak was 16 years old and yet when he looked in the mirror he felt like his 12 year old self was still staring back at him.

Even so, he still felt a pathetic sense of hope that one day Richie would suddenly decide to sweep him off his feet.

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If you asked Richie about Eddie, he'd say all about how cute he was, how his short height suited him. He'd probably tell you about his button nose, the way it got redder as the weather got colder and the way his chubby cheeks flushed with the cold. He'd tell you about how Eddie's hair fluffed up and curled with the summer humidity, which annoyed Eddie to no end but absolutely overjoyed Richie. He'd make a joke about Eddie having legs for days, but he'd actually mean it. He wouldn't forget to mention how expressive Eddie's face was, constantly painting out every emotion that crossed him.

If you asked literally anybody else, they'd tell you that he was the short, angry loser with a babyface who'd only recently outgrown his fanny pack. Richie just thought they were either blind or not looking hard enough. If Richie were a better man, he'd probably tell his thoughts to Eddie. But he wasn't a better man, so instead he kept it to himself and hid it with cheap beer, loudness and bad humour. Sometimes Richie thought he'd catch Eddie staring at him, his oh-so-expressive eyes filled with something close to admiration. But then Richie would shrug it off as nothing and fill Eddie's eyes with

annoyance instead with a badly timed mom joke or a crude nickname.

As far as Richie was concerned, Eddie was too good a person for him. He was clean cut, polite when needed but good humoured otherwise, kind and considerate. Richie was loud, obnoxious, impolite and annoying. That's what he'd heard and assumed about himself, anyway. Sometimes he'd confide these feelings and thoughts in Bev while they smoked together behind the back of the school. Every single time she'd just give him a pointed stare and tell him to stop moping and just go tell it to Eddie, who she theorised would be more than glad to hear it. He thought of it as her theorising rather than factually speaking, because theories were almost always proved wrong.

So instead of telling him about a year ago when these thoughts began to arise, he kept it to himself and tried to stamp it down, only igniting it further. Sometimes he thought about telling him, just so it'd be out and he could at least feel sure in being rejected. But then he considered the sting of rejection, deciding that living constantly questioning but never sure was easier. Lately however, he'd started to question that logic. Richie was just tired. He was very, very tired of hiding his raging crush on his best friend. He knew that it had to come out eventually, so why not now? Why not just get it over with? The faster he said it out to Eddie, the faster his recovery process from the inevitable rejection would begin. He knew it'd come out soon. He noticed Eddie staring out the corner of his eye, turning to pull a face at him to cover up his brooding expression before turning back to look out the window.

The sharp metallic 'ting!' Of the school's bell wrenched him out of his thoughts, the scraping of chairs around him and the low mumble of multiple conversations slowly setting in reminding him of his surroundings. He looked over at Eddie's seat, noticing the boy slowly standing to walk to his desk and then leave with him to find the other losers, as they always did. Today however, he just happened to notice how particularly curly Eddie's hair looked, how suddenly long his eyelashes seemed. Then, as he rose out of his chair, the legs making an obscenely loud scraping noise, he made his decision, wandering over to him and slinging an arm around Eddie's shoulder.

“Can we talk a sec Eds? It's real important. No mom jokes here, even.”